Sunflower cultivation

449. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to promote sunflower cultivation in the country;

(b) if so, the areas and States earmarked for this purpose; and

(c) the funds allocated for this purpose and to what extent the production of sunflower is likely to be increased as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) No, Sir. Two Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely, National Oilseeds Development Project (NODP) & Oilseeds Production Thrust Project (OPTP) are in operation to provide fill up to the sunflower cultivation in the country.

(b) The Agro-climatically potential districts in the States of Andhra Pradesh Karnataka, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu have been selected.

(c) Under OPTP, a sum of Rs. 199 lakhs has been allocated for Sun flower during 1988-89. During 1988-89, an allocation of Rs. 1301 lakhs has been made to the States for development of suitable Oilseed crops including Sunflower under NODP.

Successful implementation of these schemes, sunflower production is expected to be raised to 8 lakh tonnes by 1988-89.

Setting up of new T.V. Stations in backward areas

450. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to instal some new T.V. Stations in the Backward Areas; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) and (b) Establishment of 25 additional T.V. programme production centres and 155 transmitters in the backward areas, is included in the VII Plan.

Import of rice

451. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to import rice;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of the countries from where the rice is likely to be imported alongwith the quantity thereof; and

(d) the foreign exchange involved therein?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D L. BAITHA): (a) to (d) Government has already contracted for import of five lakh tonnes of rice from Thailand and two lakh tonnes from D.P.R. Korea. The foreign exchange involved in the import of seven lakh tonnes of rice is about Rs. 294 crores inclusive of freight.

Gold reserves in the country

452. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHODHURY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the press report appeared in the "The Hindustan Times' dated the 27th May, 1988 wherein it has been stated that Gold Reserves are depleting at an alarming rate in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to locate new Yellow metal mines in the country and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what would be the financial implications involved?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR): (a) to (c) The Government is aware of the depletion of gold reserves in the country which has occurred mainly on account of exhaustion of reserves in the working mines of the Kolar Gold Field under operation for over a century. The steps taken to identify new reserves include intensification of exploration through the Geological Survey of India (GSI) and Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL) and exploitation of new gold deposits by Bharat Gold Mines Limited (BGML). The MECL is continuing detailed exploration over the following blocks:

Karnataka State:

(1) Gadag Gold Field—Hosur Champion East & West blocks and Mysore Mine Option block.

(2) Hutti Gold Field—Buddini and Wandali blocks.

(3) Nuggihalli schist belt—Kempinkote.

Andhra Pradesh:

Kolar schist belt—Old Bisanatham mine and Chigargunta.

Bihar State:

Porojarna Mine block, Kunderkocha gold deposit, Singhbhum Distt.

Maharashtra:

Kolari gold prospect, Bhandara District.

The GSI is carrying out regional exploration for gold in the Gadag and Hutti gold fields (Karnataka) and Kolar schist belt (in Karnataka and its extensions in Andhra Pradesh & Tamil Nadu) as well as in the States of Kerala, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. The DGML has conducted feasibility studies on the Chigargunta gold deposit and has plans to produce initially 250 tonnes per day gradually increasing it to 500 TPD of gold ore.

(d) A total amount of about Rupees 40 crores has so far been sanctioned since 1980 for completed and running gold projects of Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited out of which about Rupees 27 crores have been spent. In addition the Geological Survey of India carried out regional exploration for minerals including gold, throughout the country which is financed from GSI's budget. During 1987-88 Field Season GSI is likely to spend Rupees 335 lakhs for different gold investigations in the country.

चीनी का उत्पादन तथा मूल्य

453. **श्री राम जेठमलानी :** क्या खाद्य और नागरिक पूर्ति मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि इस वर्ष मई, 1988 तक चीनी का रिकार्ड उत्पादन हुआ है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो पिछले वर्षों की तुलना मे चीनी के उत्पादन में कितनी अधिक वृद्धि हुई है ;

(ग) क्या यह भी सच है कि इस वर्ष जून और जुलाई में चीनी का खुदरा मूल्य बाजार में 8 रुपये प्रति किलो तक पहुंच गया ; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं और सरकार द्वारा चीनी के मूल्य को कम करने के लिए अब तक क्या कदम उठाए गए हैं ?

खाद्य और नागरिक पूर्ति मंत्रालय में उपमंत्री (श्री डी० एल० बैठा) : (क) और (ख) जी हां, 31 मई, 1988 की